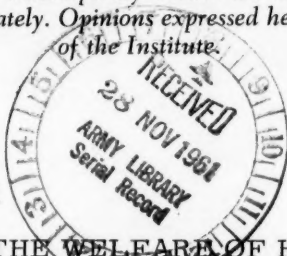


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SOVIET CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF HUMANITY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW SERIES OF NUCLEAR TESTS

The disregard for human life and world opinion the Soviets have shown in their latest series of nuclear tests stands in sharp contrast to their previous expressions of horror over Western testing.

As recently as in July, 1959, the noted Soviet fallout expert Professor Lebedinsky underscored the threat nuclear testing poses to humanity. In his articles Professor Lebedinsky traced the path of radioactive isotopes from the atmosphere to the human organism.

Other authorities, including the scientific contributors to the Large Medical Encyclopedia, condemned nuclear tests as dangerous to germ plasm. The encyclopedia article listed disturbances in mental development, as well as physical malformations, among the harmful genetic effects of nuclear fallout.

These warnings were accompanied by specific attacks on the Western powers for their possession of nuclear weapons. Western physicists who argued against exaggerations of the fallout danger were branded as warmongers.

In the light of this record of denunciation, it is understandable why the Soviet regime has made no reference to the recent Soviet tests in press or radio for internal circulation in the USSR.

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No. 7, 1961/62

SOVIET CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF HUMANITY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW SERIES OF NUCLEAR TESTS

As fallout clouds from the thirty-odd Soviet nuclear tests gird the earth, it is of interest to review the opinions of Soviet authorities themselves on the dangers to the human race from excess radiation inherent in nuclear explosions.

As recently as in July, 1959, Professor A. Lebedinsky, the leading Soviet expert on the effect of radiation on the human organism, stated in an article entitled "New Data On The Danger Of Nuclear Radiation":

Should tests continue, the inevitable increase in radioactivity will bring all humanity to the attainment of a degree of radioactive contamination which will unquestionably become a threat. It is sufficient to be reminded that even if the tests are gradually stopped, in view of the "accumulation" which has already taken place in the stratosphere, the amount of contamination will increase at least threefold in the course of the approaching ten years (Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn, International Life, 1959, No. 7, p. 36).

Two years earlier, Professor Lebedinsky provided the following description of the disastrous penetration of the human organism by radioactive particles:

Having formed during the explosion, they are carried away into the stratosphere whence they gradually fall to the ground as sediment. As a result there is some increase in gamma rays on the earth's surface and the appearance of radioactive products which, owing to their participation in biological chains, enter the organism of a human being. ("An Urgent Problem of Present-Day Biophysics," Meditinsky Rabotnik, Medical Worker, 1957).

In an article he wrote in 1959 he delved further into these dangers. Speaking of the action of water contaminated by nuclear particles, Lebedinsky said:

Water
widely used for watering plants and animals as well as for the drinking needs

(more)

of the population, provides an additional channel of entry into the human organism for long-lived radioactive isotopes.

In the U. S. A. the wheat harvest in 1956 averaged about 107 units of strontium; the 1958 harvest averaged already 155 units of strontium. Approximately the same situation was observable in Japan where in 1957 different kinds of rice contained up to 300 units of strontium. In cereal crops, a considerable portion of strontium 90 is contained in the seed coat--removed in the processing of the grain--and does not enter food for human consumption directly. However, it is retained in cattle fodder and thereby enters the human organism ("New Data On The Danger Of Nuclear Reaction," Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn, 1959, No. 7, p. 35).

Only a year ago the Soviet Large Medical Encyclopedia also described the harm done by radiation:

Ionizing radiation causes irreversible hereditary changes, which do not appear in an exposed organism (the parent) but are revealed in subsequent generations (Bolshaya Meditsinskaya Entsiklopediya, Volume 6, p. 422, Moscow, 1960).

The article went on to describe the following horrifying genetic effects on the human organism:

Among children and parents who have been exposed to radiation from an atomic explosion or from medical or scientific devices a definite acceleration is noted of defects in the development of the skeleton, of the muscles, of the central nervous system (microcephalus is a particular danger), of the organs of the alimentary canal, of the urogenital system and the respiratory system. Frequently disturbances in the mental development of children and retardation of their growth are noticeable (*ibid.*, pp. 422-23).

The Soviet biophysicist, V. Korogodin, has informed Soviet youth that "for the struggle against nuclear radiation, which is destroying the basis of life and the building material of organisms--the cell--there is only one means: the cessation of the atomic and hydrogen weapons tests" (Znaniye-Sila, No. 5, Knowledge Is Strength, 1958, p. 7). Two years ago Professor Lebedinsky wrote:

... New facts, collated during the past few years, fully support the hypothesis of the harmful effects of nuclear tests on the human organism... the deliverance of humanity from the threats of radioactive poisoning can be achieved only by one means, which has been pointed out by the Soviet Union--the means of complete and immediate cessation of experimental nuclear explosions (Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn, No. 7, 1959, pp. 33-36).

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Only last year, Soviet medical experts issued the following protest against French atomic tests in the Sahara:

From November, 1958, to February 13, 1960, there were no explosions of atomic and thermonuclear bombs. The majority of humanity, having realized the tremendous danger from an accumulation of radioactivity on our planet, supports the cessation of further explosions. The explosion in the Sahara is the work only of the supporters of the "Cold War." Soviet medical men and the entire Soviet people are expressing their solidarity with the French doctors and medical experts who are fighting for human life and health and are therefore opposing all atomic explosions bringing people new disasters (Meditsinsky Rabotnik, February 23, 1960).

General warnings on the dangers inherent in nuclear tests were accompanied by specific attacks on the Western Powers for their possession of nuclear weapons. Professor Lebedinsky wrote in 1956:

As is known, the Soviet government has done everything possible to come to an agreement with other powers on an unconditional prohibition of all forms of atomic and hydrogen weapons, the cessation of their production, and the complete destruction of existing stocks of these weapons under adequate, effective control. Such a nobly humane position, adopted by the Soviet government, is not only given unanimous support by our entire people, but is met with gratitude by all mankind. At the same time, the policy "from a position of strength" has proved to be in tragic contradiction to the most vital interests of the American people and is opposed by them (Introduction to the Russian edition of the book, Medical Effects Of The Atomic Bomb In Japan, 1956).

Elsewhere, a similar attack was made upon "Imperialism":

The unprecedented destructive strength of atomic weapons is advertised in the countries of Imperialism in order to increase war psychosis. The ideologists of militarism try to implant in every way a blind adulation of the "great strategic merits" of atomic weapons, regarding them as an absolute means of determining the outcome of a war (Bolshaya Meditsinskaya Entsiklopediya, 2nd Edition, Volume 2, Moscow, 1957, p. 1072).

Western physicists who argued against over-exaggerating the dangers of fallout were strongly refuted:

The ruling circles of the U. S. A. and England, which are interested in the armaments race, are trying in every way to underestimate the importance of the ever-increasing radiation in the atmosphere

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as a result of nuclear explosions. The arguments of Western propaganda are to no extent able to serve as a justification of the continuation of atomic weapons tests dangerous to humanity (Meditinsky Rabotnik, October 3, 1958).

Evidence that former statements on the dangers of fallout from nuclear weapons tests are now causing embarrassment within the USSR is provided by the fact that the announcement of the Soviet super-bomb explosion given in Khrushchev's report to the Twenty-second Party Congress was omitted from the first Tass radio version and was included in a corrected version several hours later.

In the light of earlier Soviet descriptions of the dangers inherent in nuclear testing, the recent series of tests, and particularly the super-explosion on October 30, throws revealing light on Soviet protestations of concern for the human race. It is quite understandable why, in addition to the desire to preserve its picture before the Soviet people as an apostle of peace, the Soviet regime has made absolutely no reference to the recent Soviet tests in press or radio for internal Soviet circulation.

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